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MY WELSH HOME:

A POEM.

BY

JOHN MORGAN,

RECTOR OF LLANILID AND LLANHARAN, GLAMORGAN.

** Quo desiderio veteres revocavit amores.*

LONDON:

ELLIOT STOCK, 62, PATERNOSTER ROW.

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THIS LITTLE VOLUME
Is Dedicated
TO
THE VERY REV. C. J. VAUGHAN, D.D.,
THE DEAN OF LLANDAFF AND MASTER OF THE TEMPLE,
IN LOVING ADMIRATION OF HIS
GREAT AND VARIED GIFTS OF HEART AND MIND,
AND WITH PROFOUND GRATITUDE
FOR THE BENEFIT DERIVED FROM HIS WRITINGS.

LLANILID RECTORY,
July 22, 1889.

MY WELSH HOME.

I.

SINCE that long day of misery
 I left thy roof, forthwith to fare,
 As other wanderers, here and there,
But seldom back again to thee ;

The years, O Home, could not impair
 Thy memory, nor distance part,
 For deep within my inmost heart
I bore thee with me everywhere.

But other visions, sooth to say,
 In alien scenes have met the view—
 A fane, a shrine of glorious hue,
And lighted with a golden ray,

And so impressed the wanderer
That if he roamed or near or far,
By night or day, the unsetting star
Of one enamoured gaze was there ;

But that was but the fancy's play,
With no results of worth or weight,
But mine, the Phosphor of my fate,
A light to lead to endless day.

II.

The lingering Summer slanted down
To Autumn, when at break of day
And weeping sore I went my way,
A schoolboy to a distant town,

And yet the while observed with glee
The leveret squatting in the fern,
The trout on guard within the burn,
The apple hanging on the tree ;

But when I climbed the hill that towers
 Above a plain on either side,
 And from its crest had last descried
The Home which only once is ours,

My heart foreboded that the line
 Which life disparted had been crossed,
 The future veiled, in shadows lost,
But the full past fôr ever mine ;

And if before me spread out straight
 The greater world for which I pined,
 What true delights I left behind !
What sanctities inviolate !

III.

The Homestead's threshold is so blest,
 It has been said or sung of old,
 That sorceries of the bad and bold
Could never hurt the Homestead's guest ;

But all ill-omened things of prey,
Which prowl by day or in the dark,
Shrank from that tutelary mark,
Which stood across and barred the way.

That charm of legendary lore,
The guard against insidious ill,
Is posted at the portal still,
And potent, as in days of yore,
As many know, but none the more,
Than we, the inmates of my Home,
For there no tempter durst to come
And desecrate its hallowed floor.

IV.

Sweet Home ! a type of calm and rest,
Of harmony without a flaw,
A realm of joy, where love was law,
And wrongs and rudenesses repressed ;

A port protected from the main,
 The stormy main of wintry skies,
 A little plot of Paradise
Regained, and blossoming again ;

Sweet Home ! where morning seldom broke,
 But brought its labour and its rule,
 And if the Hand seemed masterful,
Thine was in truth a gentle yoke,

And how unfelt the group among
 Too well evinced the sounds of mirth,
 The happy voices round thy hearth,
In laughter now and now in song ;

Sweet Home ! a sanctuary thou,
 With an unearthly glory crowned,
 A beacon light to homes around,
On sandy beach or mountain brow ;

None other than the house of God,
 A Bethel to the wanderer dear,
 Where first he felt that holy fear,
His guard where'er his footsteps trod ;

And where or ever day grew dim,
As when it dawned, would Jesus come,
The Goodman of the godly home,
And make us sit and sup with Him.

v.

The Home, with all that Home includes,
The brood of budding innocence
Secure within its sacred fence,
The heritage of habitudes,
Which grow at each successive birth
More stable and more rich and ripe,
And ever show a nobler type
Of mental and of moral worth,
And all the charities which bind
The social parts in one firm whole,
And purify the single soul ;
This forms the hope of humankind.

One may by strength of mind, or strain
Of sinew, set a bounteous Spring,
But Home ensures the harvesting,
Hoards up the wealth that will remain.
For as a branch when Spring is nigh,
If severed from its parent root,
Throws out a bloom, but fails in fruit,
The individual shall die.

VI.

We may resplendent victories gain,
And loudest blow the trump of fame ;
May bid our children go and claim
Unnumbered islands in the main ;
We may discover and unfold
The marvels of mechanic art,
And, matchless at exchange and mart,
May gather gold unweighed, untold ;

And thus an empire may arise
 The loftiest yet by human means ;
 But lo ! it splits and overleans,
And all in widest ruin lies,

If built at all upon the sand
 Which idly shifts and sinks apace ;
 A nation's best defence and base
Are happy homes throughout the land.

VII.

But happiness is conscious worth,
 And not the growth of sordid gain,
 And chooses as its own domain
The hearts reclaimed from chains of earth,

And spheres of constant calm, wherein
 The pulse of passion beats no more,
 And all the strife with self is o'er,
And vanquished lies the hardest sin.

But life at present at its best
Can but achieve a meagre hope ;
Our work requires an ampler scope,
Our wandering a completer rest.

For here we struggle overspent,
And ever pine with vain desire ;
But baffled oft we still aspire
To virtue's crown of deep content

In other worlds, if not in this :
And is not life a discipline
To mould the human to divine,
And fit it for the Fount of bliss ?

And is not earth man's hiring place ?
His vineyard, the whole universe ?
But holy homes alone can nurse
The glorious seed of such a race.

These homes—a country's best renown—
In former times were not unknown ;
But one a model, and my own,
Below a hill, beside a town.

VIII.

There were we taught indeed to gain
 The last results of human lore,
 And Science beckoning on before
Pursue it through its whole domain,

And combat Nature's stubborn might,
 Till under man's imperial hand
 She gave her stores of sea and land
For his free usage and delight.

But warned betimes that dangers lay
 In forces dire ourselves supplied,
 Which uncontrolled, or misapplied,
Must lead the noblest souls astray,

Our safeguard, too, at Home we found,
 Heaven's primal lights, by which the child
 Might guide himself, and undefiled
And upright walk life's stated round,

The fear that breeds the wise restraint,
Which best beseems ingenuous youth,
The love of purity and truth,
Which keeps unharmed the greatest saint,

And these as sanctioned by the Creed
Which came to us with birth along,
And now gives music to my song,
And to my love its only meed.

IX.

As willing hearts the charge divine
Found there, as on the banks of Nile,
"Take this, the child but yours awhile,
And nurse and train him up for mine."*

* Exodus ii. 9.

If pride and wealth the house disown,
And lowly be your lot on earth,
Deem this a trust of regal worth,
A boon, a joy, the greatest known.

The feelings exquisitely fine,
The hope that struggles upward still,
Love, patience, daring, iron will,
The soul both human and divine,

Are all in children richly stored,
And wait the due parental hand
To make the homes throughout the land
Unfailing seed-plots to the Lord.

This was, indeed, of prayer the crown,
The complement of all the love,
Which blest my Home that rose above
The tumult of the main and town.

X.

Not where beneath Virgilian sky
 The lovely bay of southern seas
 Spreads out its siren softnesses,
 And captive takes the passer-by ;*

Not where Tiburnian glades along
 Glides the smooth stream, then rushes down
 In waterfalls of wide renown,
 Immortal as its poet's song ;†

Not where above the Lombard plain
 The lonely student on his hill
 Saw cities, domes, and isles at will,
 Amidst the green or golden grain ;

* " Virgilium me dulcis alebat
 Parthenope studiis florentem ignobilis ott."

GEORGICA, lib. iv.

† " Præceps Anio et Tiburni lucus et uda
 Mobilibus pomaria rivis.
 Ille terrarum mihi præter omnes
 Angulus ridet."

HORACE.

Nor where the later Muses make
 Their chosen haunts on English ground,
 Amidst an ever-varying round
Of hoary mountain, dale, and lake ;

But on a bleak and barren coast,
 Beside a town, remote, unknown,
 Stood what awakes these strains alone,
The Cambrian Home, my theme and boast.

XI.

It stood within a quickset ring,
 Low-roofed, and barely to be seen
 Beyond its own encircling green,
The cottage Home that I would sing ;

Between the mountain and the strand
 It midway resting nested seemed,
 From whence as from a centre gleamed
The lights of huts on every hand ;

And in a bend of woodland space,
Or on the headland spread before,
Could be espied, and from the door,
The mansions of a gentle race :

Whilst close behind upon a knoll
A feudal castle rose to frown
Upon the Marcher's vassal town ;
But grandly standing formed the sole

Memorial, and in mouldering stone,
Of times when grandeur proved at best
A province wasted for a feast,
The many made to pamper one.

But who could yet survey the pile,
The massive arch, the bastioned keep,
The turf-clad court, the terraced steep,
And not idealize the while,

And dreaming what the past might be,
As I have dreamt in open day,
Resign himself unto the sway
Of Norman pride and pageantry ?

XII.

Let me renew my youthful dream
And live again the far-off days,
Familiar with our fathers' ways,
Beside each native glebe and stream.

The land of seas, of hills and dales,
Of waving woods, and winding shore,
And Nature's soberer charms before,
Remain the same in Southern Wales,

That now the wandering Norman race,
Who ocean's western sceptre wields,
Who reaps fair England's fertile fields,
Has sought even here a resting-place.

The hill still sentinel the bay,
The boulders thickly line the steep ;
The headland curbs the encroaching deep,
And flings it back in broken spray ;

The lark in circles moves to sing,
 But straight its path to peace and home ;
 The hawthorn sheds its scented bloom,
The breath of young awaking Spring ;

The dawn comes on as fresh and fair
 As ever on this earth it rose ;
 The night enfolds in one repose
The high and low, the bright and bare ;

The river runs its vocal round,
 Or silent glides along the glen,
 And every flower shows now as then,
And not a change in sight or sound.

And even life and death, I ween,
 Their wonted interludes display ;
 The morrow slays outright to-day,
But life perpetuates the scene.

But yet I see a social change :
 The unruly feel the first its sway ;
 It grows more gracious day by day ;
It comes to cottage as to grange.

All now enjoy a long release
From factions that the law defied ;
And this the Marcher's stately pride,
The guardian of the civic peace !
Said I the only boon in view
Was man's, to civilize his race ?
Nay, but to Nature spreads the grace,
And she revives and smiles anew.

XIII.

Boon Nature plays the counterpart
Of settled peace within the land ;
She smiles to greet the industrious hand,
The deep content of loyal heart.
For here at length the tribal feud,
The wrangling chieftains everywhere,
Who took a pride not to forbear
The blow imbrued with kindred blood,

And all the life of lawlessness
Of thralls to misery and want
Have ceased, and, lo ! one puissant
To rule, consolidate, and bless,
Has entered now the land, and here
Has fixed his seat, and all men yield
To him who proves that he can wield
A centred power without a peer ;
And pliant to one steadfast will
They bend them to old labour's yoke,
And put their strength in every stroke,
And so the primal law fulfil,
And reap the fruits in hardihood,
In peace and innocence of mind ;
How smoothly now the end designed
Is carried on, the common good,
When known his task to each and all,
The peasant harvesting the ground,
The burgher plying his craft renowned,
The baron judging in his hall !

XIV.

The ordered rule in one firm hand,
On which the commonweal depends,
Is not the only power that blends
And forms one nation in the land ;
A mild but an unmeasured force,
The dayspring from the orient sun,
Has reached thus far, and still runs on
Unspent upon its western course ;
The Faith divine so deftly shown
Enshrined in ritual in the fane,
Or done in pictures on the pane,
Or set to life in sculptured stone,
But so enthroned within the mind,
That though all grace, yet still is law,
To shield the poor, the proud to awe,
And re-unite all human kind.

The grace redeems man doomed to die ;
It renders less his many woes ;
It soothes his agitated close ;
It crowns his triumph in the sky.

The law concedes no claims of blood,
Nor yet of tribe, of tongue, or class,
But binding the wide scattering mass,
It re-creates the brotherhood.

A force so strong can sweep alone
A thousand variances aside ;
A bond so true must aye abide
When yet unnumbered years are flown.

xv.

In the seclusion of a dell,
Beside an ancient wood and hill,
Where, free to roam or rest at will,
The falcon and the ring-dove dwell ;

And where a river, barely seen
 Along its sunken bed below,
 Spreads out as swells the tidal flow
Its waters, flushed from green to green,

We softly tread, for in this comb
 Stands silent, solemn, and alone,
 The ecclesiarch's dream in carven stone,
Our ancestors' religious home,

Which shows amid the wild around,
 As through a rift in winter's sky
 The opening blue of heaven on high,
The one true spot with glory crowned.

Here Faith confederated speeds,
 And Hope refined in sunlight basks ;
 Here Zeal outstrips its stated tasks,
And Love, low-bending, counts its beads ;

Here souls made sore in open strife,
 Or by the foe that slays within,
 Heart'sease from rue and diet win,
And from the Rood uplifted—life.

The weak in purpose as the reeds,
Which idly bend to any wind,
Concentrate here their strength behind
The force reserved in rites and creeds ;
And here the weary find release
From cares which cause a thousand aches,
And a great calm which nothing breaks
Till lost in Heaven's eternal peace.

XVI.

There comes a sound of revelry
From yonder gay and crowded court,
Where thousands seek the warlike sport
That Norman Welsh delight to see.
For both the races are at one
In their deep love of rival play,
And often test in mimic fray
Which of the twain can be outdone.

And, hark ! the trumpet rings out clear,
And bids the combatants proceed,
When wheeling round his well-trained steed
Each meets the other spear to spear.

And though arrayed in equal mail,
And neither would in valour yield,
Superior strength controls the field,
And shouts the Norman victor hail.

The scene of contest shifts amain,
And peace asserts its subtler charms,
And both again enlist in arms,
But now in intellect's domain ;

And as the strain that wins on all
Descants on Arthur's deathless fame,
A hurricane of loud acclaim
Sweeps round the huge baronial hall,

And streamers wave upon the walls ;
But as the sound swells more and more
And wild enthusiasm brims o'er,
A silence deep and sudden falls,

When comes a youth from out the throng,
And claims the unmatched victorious lay,
And, lo ! a Briton wins to-day
The harp, the prize of British song.

Then first he felt, when bowed full low
Beneath the bright approving eyes,
The lady's smile and glad surprise
The sweetest boon that bard could know.

It was the Marcher's daughter's hand
That thus bestowed the bardic crown ;
He was a lord of high renown,
And she the gem of all the land.

XVII.

But in an instant at the word
Across the moat the bridge is swung,
Portcullis ponderously hung,
And forth he comes, that Marcher lord,

Who led at Hastings William's host,
And won a largess from his chief,
But sought beyond his Devon fief
An ampler on this poorer coast,

Where, subject to his single sway,
The suffering land has found repose,
And now he sallies out and goes
His round in disciplined array,

His visage dark of richest hue,
With carmine on the cheeks of him,
Broad-shouldered, upright, stout of limb,
And marked from out his retinue.

His charger, too, is glossy black,
With housings all of gold and blue,
Which steps in state as one who knew
The weight of grandeur on his back ;

But he who rides, unmoved thereby,
Advances through the cleaving crowd
As moves a sombre thunder-cloud,
Yet none escapes his full keen eye,

As now he scans the living scene
 And knows each comrade at his side,
 Who shares the Marcher's martial pride
And shows the same undaunted mien ;

Whilst all the people of the town,
 With all their voices lifted loud
 And bodies reverently bowed,
Salute the lord of such renown.

XVIII.

But one among the surging throng
 Seeks unespied another sight,
 And this, his one supreme delight,
He has pursued and cherished long.

What time he sought the bardic prize,
 He won, too, by the Muse's aid,
 All blessings on her bountihead,
The charm of partial beauty's eyes.

As from a cloud a golden gleam,
 This cast a glow on all beside,
 Whilst now it forms afresh, and dyed
In rainbow tints, his darling dream,

What now to him the pomp and pride,
 And all the shows of chivalry ?
 He only cares that he can see
The maiden at the Marcher's side,

And drink full draughts of deep delight,
 That she, the flower of all her race,
 Should deign by influence of grace
To accept him as her constant knight ;

And how they both in Love's sweet band
 Might join to view from oriel high
 The distant grange, the township nigh,
The mountain and the silvery strand ;

And as they looks and hearts compare,
 The British Islands, well they ween,
 Could not present a fairer scene,
Nor all the world a happier pair.

But why thus vainly dream of home
And let fond fancy free at will ?
Behold my home beneath the hill,
And my true love is yet to come.

XIX.

I stoop, nay, rather rise again,
To the true subject I design,
The home delights that once were mine—
The essential moral of my strain.

The townlet on the sea-coast lay,
A hill above, seen far and wide,
An estuary at its side,
And full in front an ample bay ;

The sheltering hill above it rose
As rise the ridgy Apennines,
Where midst impending crags and pines
A village smiles in soft repose :

The streets white-limed and in a glare,
The shadowy lanes so thick around,
Bore each a full baronial sound
And somewhat of an older air ;

And whilst the winds benignant blew,
Or a great calm possessed the seas,
The dwellers lived in careless ease,
And none could see a happier crew.

But when the tempest wildly rose,
And dashed the foam upon the shore,
Each blast and billow mothers bore
Sure presages of coming woes ;

For all their joy and livelihood
Were held in trust by faithless seas,
And every spring and summer breeze
Enticed anew a younger brood,

Who would return, those mates of mine,
True sailors, set in manly mould,
And one had dwelt in Arctic cold
And one had crossed the burning line,

And coming freighted from the sea
 With riches found at every port,
 And mingling with us at our sport,
The townlet would run o'er with glee ;
But though the house might weep and crave,
 No home again would greet the most,
 For these, ah me ! were ever tossed,
Or sunk beneath the insatiate wave.

XX.

Religion blended more or less
 With every custom of the place,
 And if it wore a serious face
It had withal a tenderness
That tasked itself to reconcile
 The strenuous mirth with sterner calls,
 Looked e'en benign on festivals,
And deigned to sympathize the while.

It bore the impress that it found
 When from its trance the Church awoke,
 And still her immemorial yoke
Defined the townlet's peaceful round.

On Sunday deep the silence there,
 The dwellings scrupulously clean,
 And every household duly seen
Assembled in the house of prayer.

At Easter, scholars to and fro
 Marched gaily singing sacred songs ;
 At Whitsuntide the rustic throngs
Poured out upon the bay below ;

The Christmas rites and Christmas glee
 Found there a welcoming alway,
 And, oh, the bells at break of day
That roused us, ringing merrily !

All Hallows' Eve, though fading fast,
 Was yet observed among a few
 Who loved to hold in honour due
A relic spared us from the past.

The wedding feast was open there,
 And bards in witty measures bade,
 When friends would come and kindly aid
To start in life the youthful pair ;

And on the eve of that last home,
 Where festal scenes and sorrows end,
 Still would each tender-hearted friend,
And still with pious offerings, come ;

And when the corpse was borne away,
 They'd sing a dirge so sad and sweet
 As to subdue the silent street,
And soothe, methought, the senseless clay ;

And year by year they would embalm
 The unfading memories of the dead,
 By scattering flowers overhead
On every Sunday of the Palm.

XXI.

They loved to brood upon the tomb,
And oft averred some vagrant ghost
Was through the townlet seen to post,
The portent of a certain doom.

And well they knew where did resort
The lady of the dazzling shroud,
The apparition of a crowd
Of witnesses of good report.

But that was an ungarnered weed,
Thrown up by a redundant soil,
A fleck that streaked, but could not spoil
The solid grain of life and creed,

Which grew upon the living root
Of steadfastness, the sacred Word,
And fixed thereto, nor idly stirred,
They ever bore the richest fruit ;

And if not cast in fashion's mould,
 Their faith, when in the balance weighed,
 Approved itself as duly made
Of finest sanctuary gold,

Which neither flinched in calm or storm,
 Nor yet in sevenfold heated flame ;
 And Death awe-struck, whene'er he came ,
Its signet saw, a seal and form ;

The form was of the Son of God,
 And His the manumitting seal,
 Proclaiming peace without repeal,
And opening to His own abode.

XXII.

They were a self-respecting race,
In bearing bold and frank in speech,
And many names* about the beach,
The manners and accordant face,
Proved some from Normandy had sprung,
And some from Denmark's distant strand ;
But with the children of the land
Both spoke and loved the British tongue.
Inured to waves and rolling mast,
At which the very child would play,
They roamed the seas, aye ready they
To woo the breeze or front the blast,

* Besides the common Welsh names, which were by far the most numerous in the district, there were also found there such surnames as Volk, Dodding, Henting, Roche, Mendooos, Devonald, Meyler, Mortimer, Bennet, Gilbert, Martin, Raymond, Selby, Dyer, Picton, Warlow, Lort, Warren, Noot, etc.

Till every peril safely passed
 And time their voyaging should close,
 When they returned, and sought repose
Upon a competence at last,
Of which they would to all impart,
 When feeling moved the open hand,
 And if unfettered the demand,
Quick, too, the avenue to the heart.

XXIII.

The hill that met my daily view
 Would ever tempt to high emprise,
 And as it rose defiant-wise
The more its fascination grew,
And though deceptive on the slope,
 Responding never to the sight,
 I set myself to scale the height,
And pierce beyond its rock-crowned cope,

And though the years crowd in between,
 I glow anew with youthful heat,
 Elated at the accomplished feat,
And at the grand—the boundless scene

That stretched below, as on that day
 When pausing oft the heath among
 To list the lark that soared and sung,
Or seated on a boulder gray

At leisure view the varied plain,
 Or ships that in the distance passed,
 I gained the mountain top at last,
And proudly scanned its whole domain.

But when I farther dared to press,
 And seek the upland out-lying space,
 Where never man had left a trace,
Where living voice fell echoless,

Then Nature viewless in the wild,
 But felt within my trembling frame,
 Closed round my path, as if to shame
The intrusion of the intrepid child,

And intimate the man must quail
 Who oversteps her bounding line,
 Nor should he break into her shrine,
Or heedless lift her awful veil.

XXIV.

The village School ! that simple sound
 Brings back again my earliest years,
 And all the band of youthful peers,
Now widely sundered, but then bound

By one firm form of discipline,
 And by one common keen desire
 To be the foremost and acquire
All learning in our humble line.

For there, the townlet of my song,
 The greatest thirst for knowledge grew,
 All deeming it the children's due,
And ignorance a shame and wrong.

Beneath its long extended roof,
 We met a most obedient band
 To one whose port implied command,
Who only looked the deep reproof,

And who adorned his lowly sphere,
 And ever sought by deed and word
 How best to serve his sovereign Lord,
And train aright His children dear.

Oh, if there lived one fit to rule,
 A faithful shepherd of a fold,
 Grave, patient, diligent, high-souled,
It was the master of that school.

He rests at last beneath the sod,
 Who wrought for man without repose
 From morning to his evening's close,
But rich his recompense with God.

XXV.

Shall I forego but with the strife
 My rightful arms and equipage?
 Endued with these let foemen rage,
And none can harm my life of life.

Do I not own when strained the most
 Beneath the onset of the war,
 A force infused as from afar,
To turn to flight the insurgent host?

But what are these, and whence they come?
 What but the Faith revealed and Truth,
 The only panoply of youth,
And best supplied within the home.

There Faith espies the stripling fair,
 Who keeps his young escutcheon bright,
 And marks him out her own true knight,
Both strong and brave to do and dare ;

His sword the Truth, which minstrels say
 Its thousands of the aliens slew,
 And brandished by the brave anew
Its tens of thousands more shall slay.

But incomplete the warrior yet,
 For prayer it is that wins the field;
 And this we, too, were taught to wield,
A household full and duly met

Day after day for sacrifice,
 When, breaking from the grosser frame,
 We soared as on a seraph's flame,
As often as on bended knees

We heard thee pour thy fervent prayers,
 My father ! Oh, the grace they won !
 A great reversion for thy son,
At needed times and unawares.

Those prayers in truth, so winged with zeal,
 So humbly placed before the throne,
 Were marvels at the matin sun,
And marvels at the evening meal ;

Inspired effusions of the soul,
Heart-wrestlings nothing could appease,
But full as were the promises
Prevailing faith should grasp the whole.

XXVI.

I said that other blood had mixed
With that of Britain's pristine race,
But yet you could not fail to trace,
And strike, the difference betwixt.

There stamped in feature and in form
You still could tell the indigenous Celt—
Short, swarthy, and compactly built,
Impulsive, sensitive, and warm ;

Broad-chested, massive-limbed as these,
Were they who left the Baltic waste,
And tall as those, and ruddy-faced,
The rovers of the western seas.

The amber hair, the raven tress,
The eyes of beaming black and blue,
Met, too, as notes of race, your view,
But olden manners less and less ;
But yonder scarlet whittle see,
And tapering hat on skirted maid,
And soothly swear the scene was laid
In some quaint spot of Normandy ;
Or as the wooden clogs ring clear
Upon the flags that pave the floor,
That from old Brittany crossed o'er
The ceaseless clatter that you hear.

XXVII.

I sometimes watch the children's play,
And wonder, as it warmer grows,
If it can vie with that of those,
The children of an earlier day,

Who ranged on roadside or in field
Contested all an afternoon,
And still beneath the full-orbed moon
The rival shouts impetuous pealed,

As we the ball would toss on high,
Or chase and check as fox and hound,
For every game its votaries found,
And none more zealous there than I ;

And when debarred the town's rude noise,
How would I fret as swelled the sound
To break away, and with a bound
Be in the thick of all the boys !

But soon there came a milder mood,
A sentiment with feeling fraught,
And self-impelled I duly sought
The truer joys of solitude,

The while I sat on hoary knoll
And fondly at the ocean gazed,
Or heard when inlanded, amazed
And mute, its mighty billows roll ;

Or when in angler fashion dight
 I hied me to a willowy brook,
 And artless threw the line and hook,
Half fearing lest a fish should bite ;

Or when the copse with golden flush
 Rang out with music all around,
 The one clear note I loved I found,
But not the bird on any bush.

XXVIII.

Aroused from sleep at peep of day,
 At once I knew by many a sign,
 The rumbling wheels, the lowing kine,
The shouts along the trampled way,

And all the stir that shook the air,
 That now with all its wonted glee
 Had come at last, and come to me,
The morning of the famous fair ;

And listening to the tumult loud,
And all the mirth of all the town,
I, too, perhaps would steal me down,
And join awhile the motley crowd ;
And as I viewed the novel scene,
The vended wares, the booths and rows,
The juggling feats, the puppet shows,
And heard the drum and tambourine,
I felt as realized to sight
The portraiture of Bunyan's pen :
This was his fair, and these the men,
And I the roving Lord Delight.

XXIX.

Observe the free and facile tread,
The finely outlined upright gait,
Of these who bear the pitcher's weight,
Self-balanced on the stately head ;

These maidens, whom you thus discern,
Convey the water far and near
That bubbles up so crystal clear,
As from an ever-flowing urn ;

And fain would I essay to sing
Its fame, for I have also quaffed
Many a deep delicious draught
From that renowned and nectared spring,*

Which likewise fed the stream that rolled
Between the dewy banks where grew
The violets in varied hue,
The primroses in tufts of gold,

And, fretting on its pebbled floor,
Awoke the softly whispering song
That day by day and all night long
Was chanted at our cottage door.

* The spring was called *Efynon drieg*, the latter word being an abbreviation of *driagle*, the Welsh for treacle, which seems to have been in the estimation of our forefathers symbolical of whatever was sweet, exhilarating and medicinal. The familiar words of Jeremiah, "Is there no balm in Gilead?" are rendered in Welsh, "*Onid oes driagle yu Gilead?*" Chaucer says of our Lord, that He "is to every harm Triacle."

xxx.

There might be found the flowing grace,
The oratory prompt and bold,
Of which Giraldus spoke of old
As native to the Celtic race.

The language, too, was surely made
A handmaid meet for rhetoric—
Sonorous, flexible, antique,
Which now could rouse and now persuade.

How often have I seen a crowd
Entranced as by a wizard's pass,
Or surging like a molten mass,
Around a voice that soft or loud
Could still enchain that throng of men,
And mould them to the speaker's will !
Perchance beneath some gray-clad hill,
Or by a brook that greened a glen,

And as unfettered as the breeze,
Arose that modulated strain ;
Or it was heard within a Fane,
Amidst the yew and laurel trees ;
Or else beneath the sea-cliffs hoar
Where dwelt the hardy fisher-folk,
And where the surf rushed in and broke
For ever on the shelving shore.

XXXI.

Let me restore to these my rhymes,
Two pictures, stirring all my heart,
And still of which I am a part ;
As when in youth's delighted times
In single file we stepped and slow
Adown a steep and rock-hewn path,
To where the tide o'erflowed the strath,
And where two boats swung to and fro ;

And as the oars in silence dipped
Set us in line upon the bay,
Along the famous salmon lay,
And on its edge, the seine was slipped ;

Then in a curve with labour long
We drew to land the lessening net,
And when at length the toilers met
Amidst the surf, a clamorous throng,

To seize the harvest of the main,
Another crowd, our destined prey,
Leaped unrestrained, and rushed away,
But never could the deep regain ;

Or when the gloaming gently stole
Across the setting sun and sea,
We hoisted sail and ran to lee
To shoot the ancient herring shoal ;

And as the skiff deep-laden wore
And showed our haul so shimmering bright,
We blessed the winning of the night,
And stepped exultant on the shore.

XXXII.

A growing shadow, seen to steal
 Across the loved sequestered land,
 Invests in gloom the sacred band
That burns with patriotic zeal,

The dread that with the newer day
 That sweeps along on iron roads,
 And all the changes it forebodes,
The language too must die away.

I grieve, yet diffidently say,
 That man advances, ever grows,
 And if an instrument oppose
It must perdie be swept away.

Let not old prejudices gray
 Ensnare the young intelligence,
 That longs to burst its narrow fence
And enter on an ampler day ;

But let the land of hill and dale,
 The land of song and generous heart,
 Assert its own imperial part
And changes for the better hail.

But love, old love, cries shame on me
 To hail the death-throes of the tongue
 In which my muse its earliest sung—
And sung, too, at my mother's knee.

XXXIII.

A spoken tongue forced year by year
 To face the growing needs of time,
 Although a nursling of the Prime,
And unto wont and usage dear,

But yet encumbering in the strife
 Of nations for a foremost place,
 In such a keen competing race,
Must hold an uninsured life.

But though an ancient tie be torn,
And the fond heart unhardened grieve,
The loss may Wales the brighter leave
And richer, as the rising morn

The landscape that in shadow lay,
When night retreats and light prevails
On northern hills and southern vales,
And bathes the whole in one full day.

But why the general ebb and flow,
And all the shifts of time denote?
I mourn myself the change that smote
My single bark one deadly blow,

When charged with all my treasured store,
And running free before the gale,
But now thrown off its purposed trail
On drifts and shallows of the shore,

To sail a solitary sea,
Where waits no port the wanderer,
For the old Home, for ever dear,
Is ever lost to peace and me.

XXXIV.

Here still it stands where bends the road,
And where the daffodillies grow,
And still where children come and go,
The house that once was our abode.

But not for me upon its floor
Can any charm the dead awake,
And the old faces sunshine make,
Or the old voices music more.

Gone are the aged parents dear,
The gentle sisters too are gone,
And I am left to weep alone,
And feel how vain to linger here;

For yonder spot is now become,
Though this doth hold fond memories,
The haunt to which affection flies—
Another and a longer Home,

There where they side by side repose,
And where the hamlet stills its sound,
And when the evening closes round
The steeple mantling shadows throws.

XXXV.

O weary were the sleepless hours,
The last within its walls I spent,
And knew myself an exile sent
For ever from that Home of ours ;
But ere I passed from out the door,
And went my lonely way afar
Beneath the keen midwinter star,
I sought each place where heretofore
I slept the sweetest sleep on earth,
Or fed the ardent student's flame,
Or shared the bliss above all fame
Amidst the group around the hearth ;

That hearth of purity unfeigned,
The seat of true yet simple taste,
Where prudence dwelt and banished waste,
And comfort competently reigned ;
Then up the garden paths I strayed,
Unsteady with the dark and woe,
And to my bower I then must go
And rest awhile beneath its shade,
The overarching ash that bent
And deftly pleached shut out the sun,
With shrubs that bind and upward run,
Then with the scarlet berries blent,
And when my slow reluctant feet
Had turned away a little space,
I stood as rooted to the place,
Whilst all around in concert meet
That moment seemed with me to mourn,
And share the pang that rent my breast,
Carningli* gloomed as if oppressed,
And of a joy familiar shorn ;
* The name of the neighbouring hill.

The rising wind a tempest blew,
The breakers sounded on the shore,
And then I viewed my Home once more,
And then I sighed a last adieu.

XXXVI.

To other scenes away from those
Wherein I drew my earliest breath,
And sorrowed o'er the spoils of death,
I went, soliciting repose.
But though the tree more bounteous grew,
More soothing bland the vital air,
And fruit and flower were fairer there,
They could not what I lost renew.
And though both heart and mind I nursed
With what adorned the recent age,
And reverently read the page
Where highest art its rede rehearsed,

When as with Clio's ancient glow
 One sang the growth of ordered might,
 And one the Philomel of night,
 In sweetest strains his deathless woe ;

These left the root of all regret,
 And solved no problem of the soul ;
 They could but lull, and not control*
 The grief that wept with Mary yet

What time she questionèd the tomb,
 If man's redemption ended there,
 If love was lost beyond repair,
 The voice Divine for ever dumb.

And when I heard with all my race
 The sea-borne sound of blow on blow,
 And felt beneath the infuriate foe
 An empire vibrate to its base ;

* " I am but an earthly muse,
 And owning but a little art
 To lull with song an aching heart,
 And render human love his dues."

In Memoriam.

And when I marked the stern demand
 To free from toll the poor man's bread,
 And saw the light of knowledge spread
From high to low through all the land,

I too must needs have borne a part
 In all that stirred the public care ;
 But brooding on the days that were
One object still possessed my heart,

And pointing like the polar star
 To one fixed spot in all my sky,
 Must by the oldest, tenderest tie
Recall my wandering steps from far,

Till now, as in the happy past,
 My love returns for one brief rest,
 But clouds arise, o'erspread the west,
And bring the storm which breaks at last.

XXXVII.

Wild wind ! the same and wailing so,
 As round the ruined castle steep
 Would equal vigils with me keep,
And nurse my own unslumbering woe,

And bring from yonder steeple vane
 Discordant sounds with every blast,
 Again, as in the mournful past,
Thou ravest at my darkened pane ;

And still thy tumult is my own,
 And all my grief awakes anew,
 As when the faltering last adieu
Left me with all the world alone.

Wild waves ! that tumble on the shore
 And speak of wrecks along the main,
 Where men have cried, but cried in vain,
Or only answered by your roar ;

To me a drearier voice ye bear,
Or so my grief bids me to think,
“He, too, who mourns the lost shall sink
In depths of fathomless despair.”

Wild thoughts ! that rise within the breast
Of him who seeks among the dead,
And would beyond the frontier tread,
But stumbles in the boundless quest—

Ye sprung that night, and overlaid
The hopes that budded from the grave,
And now I hear the tempest rave
Ye come and cast a deeper shade,

And tell me Science cannot rise
Above the ruins of the tomb ;
That Nature knows no life to come,
Nor cares for any mourner's cries.

The wave from Ocean's wind-swept floor
Emerges, swells, and rushing past
Still gathers force, but breaks at last,
And breaks upon a barren shore.

The vapour forms, spreads out apace,
And for awhile consistence shows,
But soon you see it decompose,
And vanish without count in space.

The leaf exults in vital air,
But once it fades and drops away,
It drops to absolute decay,
And Spring is powerless to repair.

Are we no better, then, than these—
The idle mist, the leaf, the spray,
Which live and perish in a day,
Which rise and fall but with the breeze ?

Must sheer Oblivion ever reign,
And not a ray of hope relieve ?
Is love to die without reprieve,
And man condemned to live in vain ?

XXXVIII.

Dear spirits, if at touch of death
Ye perished everlastingly,
And only live in memory
Whose own brief lease is but a breath ;
If man, so manacled to sense,
Can never burst his prison-vault,
Is not his nature a default,
His life a mockery immense ?
Lo ! what confusion and what waste
Is strewn around earth's noblest born,
And he himself a very scorn,
A jest, in majesty misplaced.
Well may we eat and drink to-day,
And satiate every craving lust,
For on the morrow we are dust,
And all the glory passed away,

Which made this dull earth bloom and glow,
And lighted up its humblest course,
And formed the only living source
Of all true nobleness we know.

Farewell henceforth the inspired bard,
Who cast a lustre on his line,
And gave himself in strains divine,
To reap but scorn as his reward.

Farewell the charities that grew
And beautified the meanest life ;
Farewell the hard contested strife
Betwixt the waning false and true ;

Farewell the art that vanquished time,
And played caressingly with death ;
Farewell audacities of faith,
Familiar energies sublime ;

Farewell the patient toil applied
To purify one human soul,
Farewell the long-expected goal
The race redeemed and glorified ;

Farewell the rapture at the scene,
 Whene'er I viewed the starry skies,
 And fain would read their mysteries,
And learn what lies behind the screen ;

And ye, so measureless in scope,
 Evoked from depths within the man,
 The wish, the aim, the hallowed plan,
The ecstasies of love and hope,

Which came to elevate and calm,
 As when in holy worship bent
 I heard the many voices blent
In Litany, or chanted Psalm ;

Or when, as o'er the closing tomb
 The Christian benediction fell :
 Farewell, blest visitants ! farewell,
Ye now but make a murkier gloom.

XXXIX.

The lyre is warped and false at length,
Or idly plays upon the strings,
When but a note or two she sings,
Not the full music in its strength ;

And if my strains succeed to show
That sorrow reaps despair alone,
My doubts have vanquished one by one
The other voices that we know ;

Mute is the faith that springs below
But builds its home beyond this ball,
The love that treasures best of all
The lost, and will not let them go,

And buoyant hope, life's morning ray,
Which overlaid by mist or storm
Soon shows its ever-smiling form
And ushers in the fuller day ;

The thoughts divine are silenced too,
Which owning no material source
Confirm by their inherent force
The immortality their due :

And the desires for endless life
Which cannot wholly be suppressed,
But grow impetuous in the breast,
Which knows the hard, but happy strife

For virtue and the crown before,
The perfect good, the only fair,
And through defeat and all despair
Must struggle on for evermore.

Though craven doubts and fears may rave,
And ever raise the fiercer sound,
As rushing in on shallow ground
The louder breaks the fretful wave ;

Those other forces of the soul,
Are yet the gulf streams of the deep,
Which unperturbed and silent sweep
Their certain course from pole to pole,

And mitigate each harsher air,
 And stay the tempest's frequent roar,
 And guide along each beauteous shore
To far-off regions yet more fair.

But all these brighter visions die,
 Or faint the solace that they yield,
 Whilst Sorrow's wound is still unhealed,
And I must hear one single cry.

XL.

As one benighted and in haste
 To flee the doom which he foresees,
 And ere the blast his life-blood freeze,
And he sink down amidst the waste,

Turns him aside a little space
 To sheltering shrub or hollow ground,
 Which breaks the tempest sweeping round,
And yields a transient hiding-place,

So sorrow-laden souls, forlorn,
 Court Plato, Tully, Antonine,
 And all the good who would entwine
A wreath of hope for those who mourn :
But human flowers grow but to die ;
 This fades, as faded all before,
 And losing one illusion more,
The human heart can only sigh.

XLI.

But hope revives, breaks out, and blooms,
 Beneath the beams of Gospel light,
 And Faith, the Warden of the night,
His new-trimmed lamp again relumes ;
And though outstripped by him who ran*
 Unto the tomb in Holy Land,
 I now discern, and close at hand,
The Form as of the Son of Man,

* St. John xx. 4.

Whose voice decrees our destined lot,
The dower of undecaying youth,
“I would have told you,” says the Truth,
“Did life end here and heaven were not.”

And of the home beyond the skies
He speaks in free familiar tone,
As unto children who had known
A father's house with all its ties.*

He bids the trembling heart be still
And points to mansions out of sight,
But now revealed in fullest light
For all who strive to do His will.

And every proof applied the while,
And keenest minds have held the scale,
Attests to us the self-same tale,
He doth not, cannot so beguile,

That we who follow Him, and drain
The bitter cup that mortals drink,
Must yet at last more deeply sink
To know our faith and toil were vain.

* St. John xiv. 2.

'Tis He who drew Death's dreaded sting
And rose omnipotent from dust,
Who claims a stricken mortal's trust—
I frankly give it, worshipping ;

And in the presence of that Might,
Which meets the yearnings of my breast,
The sleepless sorrow sinks to rest,
The lost shine out as angels bright :

And though regret at times may grope
Through all the vacant dwelling-place,
Among the ruins of my race,
It soars at last with steadfast hope,

That somewhere Love will yet regain,
What here it lost, a happy seat,
And where the rapture but to meet
Obliterates all parting pain.

XLII.

Ah me ! that somewhere sounds amiss
 To one impatient for his love,
 Who cannot trace that seat above,
So infinitely far from this ;

And in an universe so vast,
 With million worlds in its embrace,
 Might never reach that star-like place
Until as many cycles passed.

Upon this known and measured earth,
 How few of all the human race
 Can see each other face to face,
And learn to love each other's worth !

And though allied by claims of blood,
 And all partake one common fate,
 The barriers distances create
Invalidate the brotherhood.

Then in the boundless space beyond,
Where those I mourn are gone before,
What prospect of reunion more ?
Must not estrangement break the bond ?
But nay, responds the inspired Word,
The rent by death shall be undone,
The lost be gathered into one,
And all for ever with the Lord.

XLIII.

I knew, how well ! my earthly home,
Without, within, from top to base,
And could in retrospect retrace
However far myself might roam ;
And when my wandering steps returned,
Familiar scenes came back to view,
And every spot the gladlier grew,
And my own love the warmer burned.

But when I bid the last farewell
 To all this world of sight and sound,
 And traverse passages profound
And speed by means I cannot tell ;

When disembodied, all alone,
 Amazed, dejected, and in dread,
 Am one among the newly dead,
A stranger unto beings unknown,

But conscious that I dare not share
 The lofty bliss of yonder host,
 To me my dear ones must be lost,
For lost in light I could not bear.

But when thus helpless and dismayed,
 I seem to hear a gracious voice,
 Which bids the sinking soul rejoice,
Which cries, "'Tis I, be not afraid."

The welcome comes from Him I knew
 And followed when on earth I fared,
 And Who the heavenly Home prepared,*
And knows its mansions through and through,

* St. John xiv. 3.

And oh the bliss ! our Lord Divine,
Who has in charge my saints above
Himself restores me to their love,
And when most destitute to mine.

XLIV,

But in the supernatural sphere,
So strangely new, yet all divine,
Where men, they say, as angels shine,
They must outgrow what we hold dear.

Raised as they are above their source,
How high no mind can now compute,
They know no more an attribute
That beautified their earthly course,

The fancy, innocently gay,
Or eagle-winged enthroned in light,
The human sympathy so bright
And quick in its electric play,

The living touch of hands that knew
 To help the weak who lagged behind,
 The wounds though self-inflicted bind,
And friendship's ties though torn renew,

The free exchange of thought and trust,
 And all the grace of smiles and brow,
 These were but mortal, and are now
Consigned as such to kindred dust.

See then the flowers that sometime grew
 And then decayed and passed away,
 How from their prison-house of clay
They reappear above anew ;

And though they come from Nature's mint
 Recast, and fairer than before,
 Still wears the rose the crown she wore,
The violet its purple tint,

And still their eager lover greet
 With the old fragrance that he knows,
 And every bloom that ever blows
Brings back its own unwasted sweet.

XLV.

But if the same the saints above
As when they moved in lower scenes,
A dread intrudes and intervenes
Betwixt my rapture and my love.

If this our earthly house survive,
Wherein the ethereal spirit dwelt,
The deep disdain the patriarch felt*
I feel, and would not alway live.

Not that the weakness and the pain
Are wedded so to human clay,
That health precipitates decay,
And pleasure its own proper bane ;

But that though exquisite in form,
The body's maintenance and waste,
The indignity in touch and taste,
Its kinship with the brute and worm,

* Job vii. 16.

Are such as hurt and stain with shame
The fount of sanctitude in man,
And yet are they the essential plan
And structure of the nervous frame.

But spirit growth is perfected
When we are weaned from sense by death,
And breathe no more material breath,
Nor the low taint the passions shed ;
The body then comes forth refined
And suited to the sovereign soul,
A gem reset and pure and whole,
And all its baseness left behind.

XLVI.

An endless life we all shall share,
For so the sciolists attest,
But such a life as in its breast
Must breed the blight of blank despair.

Our life may be an influence
 To raise an atom, roll the stone,
 Wait on the wind wherever blown,
Or readjust a recreant sense ;

Perchance in yonder pendant frame
 May glitter as a globe on fire,
 Or but a spark, to drop entire
And feed an all-devouring flame ;

Or may be but a mimic sound
 Transmitted o'er the Atlantic wave,
 Or a miasma from the grave,
A pestilence to sweep around.

Alas ! the heart bereft the while,
 If this the solace science brings,
 A poet's fantasy who sings
His best, but only to beguile.

For vain the strain that spurns control,
 And heeds not what the Wisdom said,
 " Our Lord is Lord not of the dead,"
But of the living conscious soul ;

And when assigned his heavenly place,
 As here so tried, yet faithful found,
 And there as separately crowned,
Each knows himself, and face to face

Our friends revealed in radiant light
 Each other greet, and unbeguiled
 The mother clasps her long-lost child,
The life-long partners reunite.

XLVII.

“ Give us but rest,” we ever cry,
 And yet the boon we always miss,
 But this the crown of human bliss,
The happy dead attain on high ;

And as the room we softly tread
 Where lie our loved ones fallen asleep
 We for a while forbear to weep,
And stand as spell-bound by their bed,

And as we view the undistressed,
The calm, the passionless display,
Well might we deem the unbreathing clay
The symbol of celestial rest.

But friends I lost were never still,
They spurned an otiose repose ;
Free work, life's law, they freely chose,
And knew their choice their Master's will.

The willing hand performed the deed,
The busy brain contrived the plan,
The feet upon the errand ran,
The heart found in the work its meed ;

And if the Heavens give only ease,
And this their ease their highest joy,
Without a task, without employ,
The Heavens could be no home for these.

But they were trained and formed below
To rise and fill a higher place,
And now they find an ampler space,
And now they feel a keener glow,

As still their energies they bend
 To ministries of active grace,
 And all their bliss to this they trace,
That work still serves the Master's end.

XLVIII.

But those I mourn were of the earth,
 They swerved and faltered human-wise,
 And their promotion in the skies
Must far outweigh their greatest worth.

Not that the crosses which they bore
 So meekly, now are laid aside,
 And all their tears for ever dried ;
This, this we prayed for them before.

Nor that the King's own palace-gate
 Has opened wide, and now they dwell
 Secure within the citadel,
Enthroned in sumptuous estate,

Where all arrayed in robes of white
They bear the palms of victory,
Eat of unfallen Eden's Tree,
And drink of streams of pure delight,

And walk where streets are paved with gold,
And stones like pearls superbly glow ;
For all such grandeur we below
Deemed but their due a thousand-fold.

But to sit down in converse sweet
And unproved with God's elect,
To be absolved from all defect,
And show in sinlessness complete ;

To be both innocent and wise,
Nor fear again a second Fall,
Regain the crown beyond recall
And bask in day that never dies ;

To reap with joy the rich supplies
Of sweetest fruit from bitterest woe ;
To learn the wisdom of the blow
That rent in twain the tenderest ties ;

To read the secret that reveals
 How grace with man's own effort blends,
 And view the very Hand that bends
Each movement of the world's great wheels,

To wait upon the throne Divine,
 And in the Presence proudly stand,
 To execute each high command
That issues from the inner shrine,

All this looks like a dream indeed,
 A heaven beyond all human worth,
 A glory grown on this our earth
Too great from such an humble seed ;

But their old ardour for the right,
 The love of truth, the life of love,
 Could fit for any bliss above,
And not an orb outshine their light.

XLIX.

But whilst they shine without a foil,
And not a shade to intervene,
My lot this sublunary scene,
Where cares recur and constant toil ;

And not alone a lower range
Of life doth this my life disclose,
Nor yet a heart without repose,
The whole result from earthly change.

Light may annul the form I know,
And I may lose the only clue
My hope can grasp, and I renew
The bond I leaned upon below.

If riper times bring on the days
When love grown cold may not abide,
And men without one faithful guide
Forsake the old familiar ways ;

If Science with its tale all told
 The man within the man dethrones,
 And seeds that simple truth disowns,
Broadcast, spring up a hundredfold,

The soul astray and overthrown,
 And cold and sterile as the moon,
 The orb of death at highest noon,
The harvest this, at least my own.

But when new doubts flit trooping by
 And devastate in utter night,
 And I, as spell-bound with affright,
Can only sit me down and sigh,

Let me revive the faith that grew
 Within my home, beside the main,
 By this alone can I attain
The high, the holy, and the true.

L.

The Artist labours line by line,
And tasks his utmost skill and care
To reproduce the rich and rare,
And strength and harmony combine ;

But first he forms a Vision bright,
And sees in perfect beauty glow
The fairest that his art can show,
And so becomes the world's delight.

And if we also would assign
His worth and dignity to man,
We must a true ideal plan,
Then trace its lineaments Divine,
In lives wrought out by highest love,
And moulded by the holiest Creed,
The image of the Christ indeed,
Fit prelude for the Home above.

LI.

A brother in his Abbey home,
A devotee of ancient lore,
Must search out transcripts and explore
Each variant in one mouldering tome ;
He strove, as all the others strove,
To study what the Master taught,
And copying out the likeness caught
Portray the uncreated Love.
He long in vain had sought release
From sinful thought and sordid aim,
When self-subdued and dead to fame
He won the cloistered blessing, peace,
And lost it not when slumber came,
But last and hardest conquest still,
His dreams obeyed the higher will,
And woke no sense to chide or shame,

But realized the joys above,
 The bridal feast, the palm, the rest,
 The full fruition of the blest,
That kindled now his single love.

But soon the sunshine somehow fled,
 And a great darkness on him fell,
 And sitting still in idle cell,
He ever sighed, but nothing said.

He shunned the brothers' conference,
 He broke the sacramental tie,
 He joined no more in anthem high,
And prayer he deemed a grave offence ;

And even Nature's light grew dim,
 And mute the music in his soul ;
 For death, he knew, shut up the whole,
And opened out no hope to him.

But when his comrades learned his plaint,
 The setting of one lettered sound,
 Which in a palimpsest he found,
And which he judged to cast a taint

On Him they loved and followed so,
Full well they knew, that learned band,
A traitor or a careless hand
Had been the cause of all his woe,
For lo ! the text was written o'er,
But they the rendering restored,
Which brought to light their absent Lord
Undimmed—nay, brighter than before ;
Who still abides, what we, too, own,
The Crucified, beloved, adored,
The sinless man, the sovereign Lord,
The only perfect model known.

LII.

The morning light I left to roam,
That followed me so far away,
And now awakes my vesper lay,
The blessing of my Christian home,

Is still the orb my eyes pursue,
For still it shines upon the road,
To yonder long-sought last abode,
Where the old love shall be the new.

LIII,

The beaten track of yonder band,
To whom I bid a brief adieu,
I must, if feebly, still pursue,
A pilgrim to the promised Land.

When I should hasten on my road,
And yet from heedlessness delay ;
When many cares upon me weigh,
And years accumulate the load ;

When faint and feeble heart and hand,
And all the wells of succour dry,
And nothing meets the wistful eye
But arid and unending sand ;

When early zeal declines within

 And up the heights I dare not go,
 But lingering on the plains below,
Must lose all loathing of all sin ;

When fears betray the sinking soul,

 And I nowhere can see redress ;
 When sloth points out the painfulness,
But not the compensating goal,

And when the journey's end draws on,

 And Pisgah points my term of toil,
 And yet my feet would fain recoil
From ways well trodden, yet unknown,

Oh, let me then recall to mind

 The pilgrims who have overcome,
 And passed into the heavenly Home,
But left me in their haste behind—

Those dear beneath the churchyard sward,

 With whom I claimed companionship,
 Together bore the staff and scrip,
Together wended Zionward ;

And as we journeyed not unknown,
A wide community of cares,
Whilst not an acquisition theirs
But might we, too, in common own ;

For neither were they favoured more,
Nor less impeded in the strife,
All felt the irksomeness of life,
And each his several burden bore ;

Their feet like mine would sometimes stray,
And kept with pain the path Divine ;
And commonplace their course like mine,
Nor ran beside the public way ;

The morning dawned, the daylight waned
For them, as still they come and go,
And every day served but to show
The tedious round that yet remained.

But fully purposed not to yield,
They won at last the blessed goal
Where now they rest the weary soul,
And where their happiness is sealed.

Let me but follow these before,
Press onward as they ever pressed,
And I shall reach the self-same rest,
And ne'er go out to wander more.

THE END.

Elliot Stock, Paternoster Row, London.



